

R E M A R K S

Claims 1-8 and 11 are pending in this application.

The specification has been amended to clarify that EPDM is not a copolymer encompassed by the inventive olefin-based thermoplastic elastomer component (C).

The amendments and comments regarding the patentable distinctions of the present invention as described in the February 17, 2004 Amendment are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and comments, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance. A Notice to such effect is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact **Garth M. Dahlen, Ph.D., Esq.** (#43,575) at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

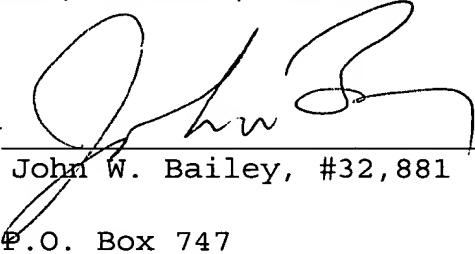
Please note that this Preliminary Amendment is being filed on or after the filing of an RCE but before a first office action. Accordingly, **no extension of time fees are necessary** in connection with this Amendment.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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By


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